

*First*

A  
TREATISE  
OF  
Romances  
AND THEIR  
ORIGINAL.

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By Monsieur *H U E T.*

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Translated out of *French.*

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*L O N D O N,*  
Printed by *R. Battersby*, for *S. Heyrick*,  
at *Grays Inn Gate in Holborn.* 1672.

Licensed, October 21. 1671.

Roger L'Estrange.

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By MARGARET H. H. T.

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Printed by J. G. & J. H. T.  
at Great Britain in Holborn, 1801.

THE  
Translator  
TO THE  
READER.

**A**S our Manners and People are refined, Romances also hold pace with us, and by the same degrees arrive to perfection. Giants, Dragons, and Enchanted Castles, which made so much noise in Romances of former times, are now no longer heard of. The Composers do now consult Nature, and endeavour to exhibit her true and lively Portraict in all their works, and so linck Instruction with Delight, that while the Reader gapes for this, he swallows both; they cajole

## The Translator

and surprize him into Vertue, and make him good when he never dreams on't. But it is not my Province to plead for Romances, be they good or bad, since they are now so much in vogue in the World, and make so considerable a part of the politer Learning: 'tis presumed the Ingenious have a Curiosity, and desire a more perfect account of them, then possibly hitherto they have met withall.

The generality are so much in the dark about these matters, they neither know whence they spring, nor how they got the name of Romances. The two Italian Authors, cited in this Treatise, were it should seem diligent enough in their researches: yet you will find what pitiful conjectures they were forced upon, and how wide they shoot from the mark, while one would derive it from *Po. n.*, the other from Rheyms.

You will find in our Author, besides his great learning and acquaintance with Antiquity, a critical wit and correct Judgement 3

to the Reader.

ment ; many instances whereof are displayed as he traverses Egypt, Phœnicia, Arabia, Persia, Syria, and the Indies, in pursuance of his design : for our Author is not content with Suidas, and Photius, and what other Magazines of Learning and Monuments are found in Europe ; but he ransacks the East, and makes the Oriental Libraries contributory.

After our Author has taken survey of these people, and considered their Wis, Inclination and Genius, and critizised upon their Writings and Romances, he descends in course to the famous Bishop of Tricca, Heliodorus ; whom he avows to have excelled all whoever went before him ; and among other things takes notice of the singular Modesty, observed religiously throughout his Work, though others say too superstitiously. For I find the Criticks are not well pleased that he should make Theagenes give the fair Chariclea a box o' th' Ear, once when she would have kist him : what have Lovers

## The Translator

to do, say they, with his Episcopal virtues? the toyings and little freedoms of Lovers and the reverence of Bishops suit but ill together; a Vestal Chastity is none of the accomplishments of an Hero, whose Love is above these scrupulous formalities which clog his Noble emotions and agreeable transports. They conclude that he had better have burnt his Book ten times over, then have made his Hero so absurdly guilty, and left so vile an aspersions on his Name.

After Heliodorus Romances degenerated, and yielded to that common fate which shortly after fell upon good Letters; and of Natural, Exact and Probable, became Wild, Grotesque and Chimerical; and so continued till of late days Monsieur d'Urfee took Pen in Hand, and presented the World with his *Astrea*; which our Author avers to be the most perfect piece that ever was Writ in its kind. For all this, he escapes the Criticks no better then Heliodorus: what notion, say they, had  
he

to the Reader.

he of bien-seance, when he makes his Heroine Astrea one of the three Shepherdesse, who are discovered all naked to Celadon? was this consistent with her honour? or had not she otherwise sufficient wherewith to complete her Conquest.

And Silvander, say they, is made a Philosopher to good purpose; brought from the famous School of the Massilians to turn Shepherd, and in this habit and condition to read Philosophical Lectures, and deliver such profound notions, as might turn the Brain, and confound all the Shepherds in Christendom: And is allowed the opportunity to discover his Talent, and talk wisely, but once in all his life time, and that is when nobody hears him.

Our Author next takes notice of Mademoiselle de Scudery, to whom the World is obliged for the Illustrious Bassa, Grand Cyrus, and Clelia; the worth of all which pieces the  
Reader

## The Translator

Reader cannot be ignorant of; I shall therefore onely present the Reader with some cavils or exceptions, which are made against some particulars in them. Some object that her so Illustrious Bassa is no very good Christian, and that it was no part of an Heroick vertue to dissemble his Religion. His Horns should have been concealed and not his Religion, whereas they are made most shamefully notorious: to make the Hero a Cuckold (say they) is such an enormity, as but too much bewrays the sex of the Author. She very franckly gives him a Wife, who (make him thankful) was no Novice, a Woman of experience, and one who after three Moneths abroad in the Seraglio gave him to judge whether she had needed any of his instructions.

They say likewise, that whoever had taught this Author her Geography, had cheated her extremely. The Fleet of this Bassa departed from the Port at Constantinople, and at or about the end of three Weeks after were seen Caracoling.

to the Reader.

*saoling in the Caspian Sea ; 'twas merrily Sayled, in about three weeks time four hundred Leagues by Land ; what mortal Ships could do the like in these days ? She had consulted some Cambridge Burgesses to make the High-ways Navigable.*

*The Grand Cyrus too, say they, is as injuriously dealt withall. For all his Toyl, Travail, and Fatigue, all his Trophées and Conquests, which he Sacrifices to Mandane ; he is like to have but a sorry bargain of her, she having been stoln away four times ere she came to his hands. The Grand Cyrus must be so credulous as believe she escapes pure and untouched from all these Ravishers ; or else this mighty Hero must be content with their leavings. Grant she were Chaste, these were too unconscionable proofs of her vertue ; for once peradventure she might come off clear, but relapses are always mortal in these cases. Her Honour might defend her the first assault, but the second bears down all,*  
is

## The Translator

*is not to be resisted by a Fort already shaken, or by so frail materials as Flesh and Blood.*

Neither (say they) has this Author been more favourable to her own Sex. Clelia has as much cause to complain of hard usage, in assigning her such a pautry Gallant as Aronces. Never a younger Brother of Normandy could leave a meaner Idea of his person and vertue, then the Heroe of this Romance. Suppose one who has neither Page nor Equipage; one in a greasie Buffe Doublet, who changes his Cravat but once in eight days, whose fortune has no establishment, who sponges upon his friends, dining to day with one, next day with another, and climbs up three Stories high to Bed at Night; This is the Portraict of Aronces. And because forsooth he was Son to Porsenna, King of the Hettrurians, (whose whole incomes scarce amounted to ten thousand pound per annum, and who at one whistle could call all his Subjects together) Clelia must

to the Reader?

must be made his Conquest. <sup>what good</sup> If (say they) it cost an Author ought to rig out his Hero in good Cloathes and handsome Equipage; to Lodge him in a sumptuous Palace, and provide him a plentiful Table, it then might be presumed that none would tick with him for so much; but considering that all this expense is onely imagination, 'tis strange that any should be such a nig-gard of it, and deny so small a matter to an Hero; unless it were done on purpose to disparage Clelia, and with these indignities destroy the quality and reputation of an Heroine, which she so well had merited.

Whereas our Author gives a hint of the Runick Characters, I might give account here of the famous Edda, which contains the wonderful atchievements of Woden, and his Wife Frigga, (whose names we still retain in our Wednesday and Fry-day) with the rest of our Gothish Ancestors: a Book which for antiquity might contend with Homer, and as fabulous as the best.

and

## The Translator

*And whereas in the controversie betwixt the Greeks and the Arabians concerning Æsop our Author seems to give the balance to the Greeks, I might easily turn the scales with the advantage to the Orientals.*

*And whereas he compute what time Rimes first obtained in Europe; I might examine whether or no Nero, who was a better Poet then Emperor, had any knowledge of them, and made then his diversion; and likewise whether they or the Measures and Cadences of the Greeks and Latins have the advantage, some affirming that Rime is trivial and childish; others asserting that Rime is more agreeable, more sweet, and more natural then the other; and though the other came first into the World, yet nature (like most Mothers) rather gives her blessing to the Cadet, then to the First born. The general approbation of all Nations, and the Hebrews themselves using Rime in whatever Poesies they make at this day, all*  
*concur*

to the Reader.

*concur to the strengthening of this opinion.*

*But I have already too long detained thee from what will give thee greater satisfaction ; shall therefore onely entreat that thou mayst not impeach our Author for making Melkin and Thalieſſin English : ſeeing that Foreigners think themſelves not bound to take notice when this Iſle was called Albion , when Britain , when England ; beſides that , writing in French , if he had call'd them Britains , they might have paſſed with ſome for French Britains , and thereby our Nation have loſt the honour of having given Birth to the firſt Romances in Europe.*

MON-



MONSIEUR  
H U E T

T O

MONSIEUR *de*

Ségrais.

SIR,

**Y** Our curiosity stands with reason, and the desire to know the Original of Romances is proper for you, who so perfectly understand the Art to make them; but the doubt is, whether it be so proper for me to undertake your satisfaction.

I have not Books, and my head at present is filled with matters of alto-

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gether

gether another nature: And I know well how cumbersome and difficult this research is; 'tis neither in *Provence* nor *Spain* (as many believe) that we may hope to find the first beginnings of this agreeable Amusement; we must in quest thereof travel remotest Countries, and in the most latent Paths of Antiquity. However I will comply with your desire; for as our ancient and strict friendship gives you right to demand me all things, so it takes from me the liberty to deny you any thing.

Heretofore under the name of Romance were comprehended not onely those which were writ in Prose, but those also which were writ in Verse. *Giraldi* and *Pigna* his Disciples in their Treatises *De Romanzi* scarce take notice of any others, and give the *Boyardos* and *Arioste* for Models. But at this day the contrary usage has prevailed, and they which now are properly

perly called Romances, are Fictions of Love-Adventures, writ in Prose with Art, for the delight and Instruction of the Readers.

I say Fictions, to distinguish them from true Histories; I add, of Love-Adventures, for that Love ought to be the principal subject of a Romance. They must be writ in Prose, to be conformable to the Mode of the times. They must be writ with Art, and under certain rules; otherwise they will onely be a confused mass without order or beauty.

The chief end of a Romance, (or (at least) that which ought so to be, and which the Composer ought to propose to himself, is the Instruction of the Reader, to whom he must always present Vertue crowned, and Vice punished. But as the spirit of man naturally hates to be taught, and self-love does spurn against Instructions, 'tis to be deceived by the blan-

dishments of pleasure, and the severity of Precepts to be sweetn'd by the agreement of Examples; and thus our own faults may be amended while we condemn them in others.

Thus the diversion of the Reader, which a good Romancer seems chiefly to design, is but subordinate to his principal end, which is the Instruction of the mind, and correction of manners: And Romances are more or less regular, according as they are more or less remote from this definition and end.

Of these I pretend to entertain you, and I presume your curiosity reaches no further.

I shall not therefore treat here of Romances in Verse, much less of Epick Poems; which besides that they are in Verse have moreover different essentials, which distinguish them from Romances, though otherwise there is a very great relation; and following the

the maxime of *Aristotle* (who teaches that a Poet is more a Poet by the Fictions he invents then by the Verse which he composes) Makers of *Romances* may be ranked among the Poets. *Petronius* tells us that Poems are to move in a great circumference, by the Ministry of the Gods, and expressions free and hardy, so that they may be taken rather for Oracles, thrown from a spirit full of fury, then for a faithfull and exact Narration.

Romances are more simple, are not so lofty, nor have those Figures in the invention and expression.

Poems have more of the marvellous, though always bounded within probability. Romances have more of the probable, though sometimes they incline to the marvellous.

Poems are more regular and more correct in the contrivance, and receive less of matter of Events and Episodes.

Romances are capable of more, because being not so elevate and full of Figures, they do not so much stretch the wit, and so suffer it to be furnished with a greater number of different *Ideas*.

In fine, Poems have for their subject some Military or Politick action, and treat not of Love but upon occasion.

Romances on the contrary have Love for their principal Theme, and meddle not with War or Politicks but by accident; I speak of regular Romances: for the most part of the old *French*, *Spanish*, and *Italian* Romances have much more of the Soldier than the Gallant in them.

This made *Giraldi* believe that the name of Romance came from a Greek word, which signifies Force and Valour, because these Books were made to set forth and vaunt the valour and prowess of the *Palladines*; but *Giraldi* was

was mistaken in this, as you shall see afterwards.

Neither are these Histories comprehended here, which are observed to contain many falsehoods, such as that of *Herodotus*, who (by the way) is not so guilty as many think. The Navigation of *Hanno*; the Life of *Apollonius*, writ by *Philostratus*, and many others.

These works are true in the main, and false in some parts; Romances on the contrary are true in some particulars, and false in the gross; those contain truth mingled with some falsehood, these are falsehoods with some intermixture of truth. I would say that truth has the greater stroke, in Histories, but that falsehood is predominant in the Romance, inso-much that these may indeed be altogether false, both in the parts and in the whole.

*Aristotle* teaches us that Tragedy,

the argument whereof is known and taken from History, is the most perfect, because 'tis neerer verisimilitude than that whose argument is new and mere invention; nevertheless he condemns not the later, his reason is for that notwithstanding the argument be drawn from History, yet the greater number of the Spectators are ignorant of it, and it is new in respect of them, and fails not however to give diversion to all the World. The same may be said of Romances, with this distinction always, that a total Fiction of the argument is more allowable in Romances, where the Actors are but of indifferent Fortune, as in the *Comick Romances*, then in the *Heroick Romances*, where Princes and Conquerours are the Actors, and where the adventures are Memorable and Illustrious, because 'tis in no wise probable that the great Transactions and Events lay hid to the World, and

and neglected by Historians and probability which is not always found in History, is essential to a Romance.

I exclude also from the number of Romances certain Histories which in the gross and in the detail are mere invention, but invented onely for default of truth: such are the imaginary Originals of most Nations, especially of the most Barbarous; of which sort are those Histories so grossly forged by the Monk *Annius Kiterbensis*, which have merited the indignation or contempt of all the Learned.

I put the same difference between Romances and these kinde of works, as betwixt those who by an innocent artifice disguise and go in Masquerade to divert themselves, while they give diversion to others, And Rogues who taking the name, and personating such as are dead or absent, del-

els

less themselves of their goods by favour of some resemblance.

Lastly, I exclude Fables also from my Subject, for a Romance is the Fiction of things, which may but never have happened. Fables are Fictions of things, which never have nor ever can happen.

After having agreed what works properly deserve the name of *Romances*, I assert that their invention is due to the *Orientals*, I mean to the *Egyptians*, *Arabians*, *Persians* and *Syrians*. You will avow the same without doubt, when I have shewn that most of the great Romancers of Antiquity sprung from these people. *Clæarus*, who made Books of Love, was of *Cilicia* a Province neer *Syria*. *Iamblicus*, who writ the Adventures of *Rhodanus* and *Sinonis*, was born of *Syrian* Parents, and educated at *Babylon*. *Heliodoras*, Author of the Romance of *Theogenes* and *Chariclea*, was  
of

## and their Original.

II

of *Emeses* a Town of *Phœnicia*. *Lucian*, who writ the *Metamorphosis* of *Lucius* into an *Ass*, was of *Samosata*, chief City of *Comagena*, a Province of *Syria*. *Achilles Tatius*, who taught us the Amours of *Clitophon* and *Leucippe*, was of *Alexandria* in *Egypt*. The Fabulous History of *Barlaam* and *Josaphat* was composed by St. *John* of *Damas* *Metropolis* of *Syria*. *Damascius*, who made four Books of Fictions, not only incredible, as he Intitles them, but gross and far remote from all probability, was also (as *Photius* assures us) of *Damas*. The three *Xenophons* Romancers, which *Suidas* speaks of, one was of *Antioch* in *Syria*, and another of them of *Cyprus*, an Isle near that Countrey; so that this Countrey deserves rather to be called the Countrey of Fables then *Greece*, whither they were onely Transplanted; but withall they found the Soil there so good and agreeable, that they have  
admi-

admirably well taken Root.

'Tis also hardly credible how all these People have a *Genius* singularly disposed and addicted to Poetry, Invention and Fiction; all their discourse is Figures; they never express themselves but in Allegories; their Theologie and Philosophie, but principally their Politicks and Morals, are all couched under Fables and Parables.

By the *Hieroglyphicks* of the *Egyptians* we may see to what point that Nation was *Mysterious*, every thing with them was expressed by Images, all in disguise; their Religion was veyled; they never made discovery of it to the *Prophane*, but under the Masque of Fables, and they never took off this Masque, but for such as they judged worthy to be imitated in their *Mysteries*. *Herodotus* saith that the *Greeks* had from them their *Mytholoprick* Theologie, and he tells some stories

stories, which he learned of the *Egyptian* Priests, the which (for all he is so credulous and fabulous himself) he relates onely as Tales, which Tales failed not to be agreeable, and tickle the curious wit of the *Greeks*, a people (as *Hecadornus* testifies) desirous to learn, and lovers of Novelty.

And it was without doubt from these Priests that *Pythagoras* and *Plato* in their Voyages to *Egypt* learned to transform their Philosophie, and to hide it under the shadow of Mysteries and Disguisements.

For the *Arabians* consult their Books, you will find nothing but Metaphores, drawn by the head and shoulders, similitudes and fictions. Their *Alcoran* is of this sort, *Mahomet* saith he made it so to the end it might be learned with less difficulty and not so easily be forgotten. They have translated *Esop's* Fables into their Tongue, and some among them have

com-

composed the like. That *Locman*, so renowned throughout all the *East*, is no other but *Aesop*; his Fables, which the *Arabians* have amassed together into a huge Volum; got him so great esteem among them, that the *Alcoran* vanateth his Wisdom in one Chapter, which is therefore Intituled by the name of *Locman*. The lives of their Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, are all fabulous. Nothing relishes so deliciously with them as Poësie, which with them is the ordinary study of their best Wits. This inclination of theirs is not new, it possessed them before *Mahumet*, and they have Poems of those times. *Erpennius* affirms, that all the World beside put together have not had so many Poets as single *Arabia*. They reckon sixty which are among them as it were Princes of Poësie, and which have great Troops of Poets under them. The best have treated of Love in their *Eclogues*,

logues, and some of their Books on this Subject have passed into the *West*. Many of their *Caliphs* have not thought Poesie unworthy of their application. *Abdalla* (one amongst them) signalized himself upon this occasion, and made a Book of Similitudes, as *Elmacin* reports.

'Tis from the *Arabians* (in my opinion) that we receive the art of *Rimming*; and I see much of probability that the *Leonine Verses* have been made after their example; for it does not at all appear that rimes had course in *Europe*, before the entrance of *Tariq* and *Muza* into *Spain*; whereas great quantity might be observed in the following Ages; though otherwise I could easily make it appear, that Verses in Rime were not altogether unknown to the Ancient *Romans*.

The *Persians* have not at all yielded to the *Arabians* in the art of Lying agreeably; for notwithstanding Lies were

were otherwise most odious to them in conversation, and they forbid their Children nothing with so great severity; nevertheless in their Books and Commerce of letters, these pleased them infinitely if Fictions are to be called Lies. To be convinced of this one shall onely read the fabulous Adventures of their Law-giver *Zoroaster*. *Strabo* saith that the Masters among them give their Disciples Moral Precepts, wrapt up in Fictions: he tells us in another place that much credit is not to be given to the Antient Histories of the *Persians*, *Medes*, and *Syrians*, by reason of the inclination their Writers had to relate untruths for these, seeing that they who made profession of writing Fables were in esteem, were perswaded that people would take pleasure to read Fables and forged Relations, written after the manner of Histories. The Fables of *Aesop* are so much to  
 their

their gust, that they appropriate the Author: he is the same *Locman* of the *Alcoran*, whom I mentioned before, who is so renowned among all the people of the *Levant*, that they will needs rob *Phrygia* of the honour of his birth, and attribute it to themselves; for the *Arabians* say he was of the Race of the *Hebrews*, and the *Persians* say he was an *Arabian Negro*, and lived in the Town of *Castuin*, which was the *Asacia* of the Ancients. Others on the contrary seeing that his life writ by *Mirkond* has much resemblance with that of *Aesop*, which *Maximus Planudes* has left us; and having observed that as Angels give Wisdom to *Locman* in *Mirkond*, so *Mercury* bestows the Fable upon *Aesop* in *Philostatus*. They are perswaded that the *Greeks* have stoln *Locman* from the *Oriental*s, and made thereof their *Aesop*; but I must not here discuss this controversie. I shall

onely put you in mind by the way to remember what is said by *Strabo*; that the Histories of the people of the *East* are stuf with Lies, and are in no wise faithful or exact; and that it is most probable they have been Fabulous in speaking of the Author and Original of Fables, as well as in all the rest; and that the *Greeks* are more diligent, and of better credit, both in their Chronology and History; and that the conformity of *Mirkonds Locman* with the *Aesop* of *Planudes* and *Philostratus*, does no more prove that *Aesop* is *Locman*, then it proves that *Locman* is *Aesop*. The *Persians* have surnamed *Locman* the *Sage*, for that *Aesop* was in effect ranckt among the number of the Sages. They say he was profoundly knowing in Medicine, that he found out admirable Secrets, and among the rest that of reviving the Dead.

They have so well glossed, paraphrased,

phrased, and augmented his Fables, that they (as the *Arabians*) have made thereof a very great Volum, a Copy whereof is to be seen in the *Vatican*; his Reputation has reached even unto *Egypt* and into *Nubia*, where his Name and Wisdom are in great veneration. The *Modern* Turks have no less esteem for him, and believe with *Mirkond* that he lived in *David's* time, wherein (if in truth it be *Aesop*, and that we may believe the *Greek* Chronologie) they are mistaken but about the matter of 450 years, which for the Turks is very well computed, for they rarely hit so neer in their computation. This would accord better with *Hesiod*, who was Contemporary of *Solomon*, and to whom is due (according to the report of *Quintilian*) the glory of the first invention of Fables, which is attributed to *Aesop*.

There are no Poets that equal the

*Persians* in the licence they give themselves to Lye: in the lives of their Saints, and about the Original of their Religion, and in their Histories, they have so disfigured those, the truth whereof we know by the relations of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, that they are not to be known again; and even degenerating from that laudable aversion they heretofore had against those who served themselves with a lye for their interests, they now account it an honour. They are passionately in love with Poesie; it is the diversion both of the Princes and People, and the principal at a *Regale* were wanting, if no Poetry were there. Their works of Galantry, and Love-stories have been famous, and discover the Romancing *Genius* of this Nation.

The *Indians* also (Neighbours of the *Persians*) had like them a strong inclination to fabulous inventions. *Sanda-*  
*ber*

ber the *Indian* composed a Book of Parables, which was Translated by the *Hebrews*, and which at this day is to be found in the Libraries of the curious. Father *Poussin* the Jesuit has joyned to his *Pachymeron*, which he lately Printed at *Rome*, a Dialogue between *Absolom* King of the *Indies* and a *Gymnosophist*, upon divers questions of Morality; wherein this Philosopher never expresses himself but by Parables and Fables, after the manner of *Aesop*. The Preface imports that this Book was made by the wisest and most knowing Men of the Nation, and that it was carefully kept in the Treasury of the Charters of the Realm; that *Perxoer*, Physician of *Chosroer* King of *Persia*, Translated it out of *Indian* into *Persian*; some other from *Persian* into *Arabian*, and *Simeon Sethi* from *Arabian* into *Greek*. This Book is so little different from the Apologues, which bear the name

of the *Indian Pilpay*, and which were seen in *French* some few years since, that there is no doubt but that it was either the Original or the Copy; for 'tis said that this *Pilpay* was a *Brachman* who had share in the grand affairs of State and Government of the *Indies* under King *Dabchelin*, that he comprises all his Politicks and Morals within this Book, which was preserved by the Kings of the *Indies* as a Treasure of Wisdom and Learning: that the reputation of this Book being carried so far as to *Nonchirevon* King of *Persia*; he procured a Copy thereof by the means of his Physician, who Translated it into *Persian*, that *Calife Abuiasfar Almanzor* caused it to be Translated from *Persian* into *Arabian*, and another out of *Arabian* into *Persian*; and that after all these *Persian* translations, a new one was made different from all the former, and from this came the *French* translation.

Cer-

Certainly whoever shall read the History of the pretended Patriarchs of the *Indians Erammou* and *Bremaw*, of their Posterity and Propagation, shall need no other proof of the love this people have for Fables. I therefore readily believe that when *Horace* gave the Epithete of Fabulous to the River *Hydappes*, which has its Source in *Persia*, and finishes its course in the *Indies*; his thought and meaning was that it begins and end its course among people very much addicted to Fiction and Disguisements.

These Fictions and Paraboles which you have seen make up the Prophane learning of the Nations before mentioned, have in *Syria* been Sanctified; the Sacred Authors complying with the humour of the *Jews*, made use thereof to express the inspirations they received from Heaven. The Holy Scripture is altogether Mysterious, Allegorical, and Ænigmatical.

The *Talmudists* believed that the Book of *Job* is no other but a parable of the *Hebrems* invention: this Book, that of *David*, the *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, the *Canticles*, and all other Holy Songs, are Poetical works abounding with Figures, which would seem bold and violent in our Writings, and which are ordinary in those of that Nation. The Book of *Proverbs* is otherwise called the *Parables*; because *Proverbs* of this sort, according to the definition of *Quintilian*, are only short Fictions, or Parables exprest in little.

The Book of *Canticles* is a kind of Dramatick Poem, where the passionate sentiments of the Bridegroom and Spouse are exprest after a manner so tender and touching, that we should be charmed thereby; if these expressions and figures had some little more of conformity with our *Genius*, or that we could devest our selves of that unjust

unjust preoccupation, which makes us dislike all that is any little remote from our usage, in which we condemn our selves without perceiving it; since that our lightness never permits us to persevere long in the same customes.

Our Saviour himself scarce ever gave any precepts to the *Jews*, but under the veil of Parables. The *Talmud* contains a Million of Fables, every one more impertinent then other: many of the *Rabbins* have afterwards explained, reconciled, and amassed them together in their particular works; and besides this have composed several Poësies, Proverbs, and Apologues.

The *Cypriots* and *Cilicians* have invented certain Fables, which did bear the name of these People; and the habit which the *Cilicians* in particular had of Lying, has been noted by one of the *Ancientest* Proverbs, which  
has

has been currant in *Greece*.

Lastly, Fables have been in such vogue all over these Countries, that amongst the *Assyrians* and *Arabians* (according to the testimony of *Lucian*) there were certain persons, whose sole profession was to explain Fables; and these men lived so regularly, that they lived far longer than other People.

But it is not sufficient to have discovered the Source of Romances; we must see by what Channells they have been conveyed to, and spread over *Greece* and *Italy*: and whether they have passed from thence to us, or that we have them from elsewhere. The *Ionians*, a people of *Asia Minor*, being raised to a great Power, and having acquired vast Riches, were plunged in Luxurie and Voluptuousness, inseperable companions of plenty.

*Cyrus* having subdued them, by the taking of *Crasus*, and all *Asia Minor* being

being with them fallen under the power of the *Persians*, they received their manners with their Laws; and mixing their Debauches with those their own inclination had before carried them to; they became the most Voluptuous people in the World: they refined upon the pleasures of the Table, they made the addition of Flowers and Perfumes, they found out new Ornaments for their Houses, the finest Wools, and the fairest Tapestries of the World came from them; they were Authors of the Lascivious Dance called the *Ionick*; and they became so remarkable for effeminateness, that it past into a Proverb: but amongst these *Milesians* surpassed all in the science of pleasures, and were most ingenious in their delicacies: these were the first who taught the *Persians* the Art of making Romances, and travelled therein so happily, that the *Milesian* Fables, that

is to say their Romances, full of Love-stories and dissolute Relations, were in the highest reputation: 'tis very likely that Romances were innocent, till they fell into their hands; and only contained singular and memorable adventures: that these first corrupted them, and stuf't them with lascivious narrations and affairs of love. Time has consumed all these works; it has indeed preserved the name of *Aristides*, the most famous of their Romancers, who writ several Books of those called *Milesian Fables*. I find that one *Dionysius* a *Milesian*, who liv'd under the first *Darius*, writ fabulous Histories, but not being certain whether this was not onely a compilation of Ancient Fables, and not seeing sufficient foundation, to believe that these were of those, properly called *Milesian Fables*, I do not number him amongst the makers of Romances.

The *Ionians* who came from *Attica*  
and

and *Peloponnesus*, mindful of their original, maintained a great correspondence with the *Greeks*. They sent their children reciprocally for breeding, and that they might be acquainted with each others manners; by this so frequent commerce, *Greece*, which of it self had inclination enough for Fables, learned readily of the *Ionians* the art of composing Romances, and did cultivate it with success; but to avoid confusion, I shall essay, according to the order of time to give account of those *Greek* Writers, who have been famous in this art.

I find none before *Alexander the Great*, which perswaded me that the *Romantick* Science made no considerable progress among the *Greeks*, before they had it from the *Persians* themselves when they subdued them, and run it to its Source. *Clearchus* of *Soli*, a Town of *Cilicia*, who lived  
in

in *Alexanders* time, and was with him a Disciple of *Aristotles*, is the first I find to have writ Books of Love; though I do not well know whether these were not a Collection onely of severall Love-passages, drawn from History or vulgar Fable, like that which *Parthenius* afterwards made under *Augustus*, which is yet extant. That which causeth this suspition, is a little story cited by *Athenens* out of him, wherein are reckoned several tokens of love and esteem, which *Gyges* King of *Lydia* gave to a Courtesan his Mistrefs.

*Antonius Diogenes* according to the conjecture of *Photius* lived some little time after *Alexander*, and in imitation of *Homers Odysses*, and the hazardous Voyages of *Ulysses*, made a true Romance of the Voyages and Amours of *Dinias* and *Dercyllis*. This Romance, though very faulty in many things, and filled with fooleries and rela-

relations improbable, and scarce excusable even in a Poet, may notwithstanding be called regular. *Photius* has an abstract thereof in his *Bibliotheca*, and saith he believes it to be the source of that which *Lucian*, *Lucius*, *Iamblicus*, *Achilles Tatius*, *Heliodorus*, and *Damascius* have writ in this kind; however, he adds in the same place, that *Antonius Diogenes* makes mention of one *Antiphanes* more ancient then himself, who (he saith) writ a Book of wonderful Histories, like his; so that he may as well be thought to have given the *Idea* and matter to these Romances which he names, as *Antonius Diogenes*. I suppose he must be understood to speak of *Antiphanes* the Comick Poet, who, the Geographer *Stephanus* and others say, made a Book of incredible relations and ridiculous. He was of *Berge* a Town of *Thrace*, but 'tis not known of what Countrey *Antonius Diogenes* was. I can-

I cannot tell precisely in what time *Aristides* of *Miletus* lived, whom I spoke of before; what we may be confident of is, that he lived before the Wars of *Marins* and *Sylla*, for *Strabena* a Roman Historian of that time translated his *Milesian Fables*: this work was full of obscenities, and thereby gave great delight and entertainment to the *Romans*, so that the *Sarenas*, or Lieutenant General of the *Parthian* Estate, who defeated the *Roman* Army under *Crassus* his Command, having found these among the Baggage of *Roscius*, took occasion thereupon before the Senate of *Seleucia*, to insult over and rail at the weakness and effeminate disposition of the *Romans*, who even during the War could not be without such like diversions.

*Lucius* of *Patras*, *Lucian* of *Samosata*, and *Iamblicus* were all well nigh contemporaries, and lived under *Antoninus*

and

*Marcus Aurelius*, the first of these is not to be accounted among Roman-cers, for he onely made a collection of *Metamorphoses*, and the Magical Transforming of Men into Beasts, and of Beasts into Men, dealing *bona fide*, and believing every thing that he writ. But *Lucian* more wise and cunning then he, relates some part of his History to mock and make sport therewith, according to his custom, in the Book which he Intitled *Lucius his Ass*, to intimate that that Fiction was taken from him. This in effect is an Abbridgement of the two first Books of *Lucius* his *Metamorphoses*, and this fragment lets us see that *Photius* had reason to complain of the smuttiness so frequent in him. This so ingenious and renowned *Ass*, whose History these Authors writ, was much akin to another of like worth and merit, whereof elsewhere the same *Photius* speaks after *Damascius*; This

Afs (saith he) was the Chattel of a certain *Grammarian* named *Ammonius*, and was indued with such a gentle spirit, and so born to be polite and capable of fine things, that it would gladly even leave Meat and Drink, to hear Verses repeated, and would be sensibly touched and taken with the graces and beauties of the Poetry. The *Brancaleon* is doubtless a Copy of this *Afs* of *Lucians*, or of that of *Apuleus*; this is an *Italian* Fiction very divertising and full of Wit. *Lucian* besides his *Lucius* made two Books of wild and ridiculous Histories, and which he declared to be such, protesting withall that those things never have, nor ever can come to pass; some seeing these Books joyned to that wherein he gives directions for the writing a History well, have been perswaded that he intended this for an example of what he had taught, but he declares at the entrance

france of the Book, that he had not any further design in it, save only to mock at so many Poets, Historians, and even Philosophers themselves, who with impunity delivered Fables for truths, and writ such false relations of Foreign Countries, as *Ctesias* and *Iambulus* had done. If then it be true, as *Photius* assures us, that the Romance of *Antonius Diogenes* has been the Source of these two Books of *Lucian*; 'tis to be understood that *Lucian* took occasion from this Romance, as also from the Fabulous Histories of *Ctesias* and *Iambulus*, to write his, and thereby make their vanity and impertinence appear.

About the same time *Iamblicus* published his *Babylonicks*, for so he called his Romance, in which he far excelled all those who went before, for if one may judge of it by the abridgement, which *Photius* has left us, his design comprehends but one action,

dressed with all convenient Ornaments, accompanied with *Episodes* arising from the principal matter; Verisimilitude is observed most exactly, the Adventures are mixed with a World of Variety and without confusion, Art onely is wanting in the contrivance of his Plot; he has grossly followed the order of time, and has not at his first Launching plunged the Reader, as he might have done, into the middle of his subject after the example *Homer* gives us in his *Odyssey*. Time has been favourable to this Piece, and it is to be seen in the Library of the *Escorial*.

*Heliodorus* has surpassed him in the disposition of his Subject, as in all the rest. Hitherto the World had never seen any thing better designed, and more compleat among Romances, then the Adventures of *Theagenes* and *Chariclea*; nothing can be more chaste then their Loves. Whereby may  
appear

appear (besides the Christian Religion, whereof the Author made profession) that his own nature had given him such an air of Vertue, as shines throughout all his work; in which not onely *Iamblicus*, but even almost all the rest are much his Inferiours; besides his Merit advanced him to the Dignity of an Episcopal Sea, he was Bishop of *Tricca* a City of *Thessalie*; and *Socrates* reports that he introduced within that Province the custom of deposing such of the Clergy, as abstained not from those Women they had Espoused before they were ordained Priests. All which makes me much suspect what *Nicophorus* a credulous Writer of little judgement or fidelity relates, that a Provincial Synode understanding what danger the reading of this Romance, which was authorised by the dignity of its Author, made the young people fall into; and having proposed to him this alter-

native, either to consent that his Book should be burned, or else to resign his Bishoprick, he made choice of the latter; for the rest I cannot but exceedingly wonder that a Learned Man of these times should doubt whether this was the Book of *Heliodorus* Bishop of *Tricca* or no, after so evident Testimony of *Socrates*, *Photius*, and *Nicephorus*. Some have been of opinion that he lived about the end of the twelfth Age, confounding him with *Heliodorus* the *Arabian*, whose life *Philostrophus* has writ among those of the other *Sophists*. But it is known that he was contemporary of *Arcadius* and *Honorius*; we also see that in the Catalogue which *Photius* made of the Romancers, who he believed had imitated *Antonius Diogenes*, where he names them according to the order of time, he has placed *Heliodorus* after *Iamblicus*, and before *Damascius*, who lived in the time of

of the Emperour *Justinian*.

By this account *Achilles Tatius*, who made a regular Romance of the Amours of *Clitophon* and *Lencippe*, should have preceded, for I find nothing else whereon to ground my conjecture of his Age, others think him more recent by his style, but however he is not in any wise to be compared with *Heliodorus*, neither in the regularity of his manners, nor in the variety of events, nor in the Artifice in unravelling his Plots; his stile (in my mind) is to be preferr'd to that of *Heliodorus*, he is more simple and natural, but *Heliodorus* more forced: finally, some say that he was a Christian and Bishop too; 'tis strange that the obscenity of his Book should be so easily forgot, and more then this that the Emperour *Leon* surnamed the Philosopher, has commended the Modesty thereof in an *Epigram*, which is yet extant, and not onely permitted, but

counsell'd the reading of it from one end to the other; to those who profess the love of Chastity.

Possibly I place here too rashly that *Athenagoras*, under whose name there goes a Romance, the Title whereof is, *Of true and perfect Love*; this Book has not appeared abroad but onely in French of *Fumee's* translation, who tells us in the Preface that he had the Greek Original from Mr. *du Lamane*, Prothonotary of Mr. the Cardinal *d'Armagnac*, and that he never saw it elsewhere. I almost dare add, that never any person saw it since, for his name was never mentioned (that I know of) in the Catalogues of any Libraries; and if at this day it have any being, 'tis certainly buried among the dust, in the Closet of some Illiterate person, who possesses this Treasure and knows not of it; or else 'tis in the hands of the envious, who might gratifie the publick therewith but

but will not ; the Translator saith further, that he believes this to be the Production of that famous *Athenagoras* , who writ the Apology for Christian Religion, in the manner of a Legation , addressed to the Emperours *Marcus Aurelius* and *Commodus* , and a Treatise of the Resurrection. The chief ground of his opinion is the style which he finds conformable to that of his works, and whereof he might well enough judge , having the Originals in his power. And finally he takes this for a true History, not understanding the art of Romances. For my part though I cannot pronounce thereof with certainty, not having seen the *Greek* Original, nevertheless by reading the Translation I shall not stick to affirm that he does not without some reason attribute it to *Athenagoras* Author of the Apology, the reasons are, that the Apologist was a Christian, and

and this speaks of Divinity, after a manner which is inconsistent with any but a Christian, as when he makes the Priests of *Hammon* say, 'That there is but one God, and that every Nation desirous to represent his essence to the simple, had invented divers Images, all which exprest but the same thing, that their true signification being lost with the times, the Vulgar believed that there were so many Gods as they saw Images, and idolatry sprung from thence, that *Bacchus* when he built the Temple of *Hammon*, placed in it no other Image save onely that of God, because as there is but one Heaven, which contains but one World, so in this World there is but one God, who is communicated in Spirit. He makes thus much and more be said by certain *Egyptian* Merchants, to wit, that the Gods of the Fable denoted the different actions of this

Sove-

‘Sovereign, and one only Divinity;  
 ‘who is without beginning and with-  
 ‘out end, and whom he calls obscure  
 ‘and dark, for that he is Invisible and  
 ‘Incomprehensible. Moreover the dis-  
 courses of the Priests and Merchants  
 upon the Divine Essence, very much  
 resemble those of *Athenagoras* in his  
*Legation*; the Apologist was a Priest  
 of *Athens*, this was an *Athenian* Phi-  
 losopher, both seem Men of sense and  
 great learning, and well read in An-  
 tiquity.

But on the other side many things  
 may make us suspect, not onely that  
 this is not *Athenagoras* the Christian,  
 but also that the Book it self is a  
 meer forgery.

*Photius* giving an exact account of  
 those who had been makers of Ro-  
 mances before his time, takes no no-  
 tice of him at all; no body ever saw  
 a Copy of this Romance in any Li-  
 brary, and that which the Transla-  
 tor

tor made use of never appeared since. Besides he represents the Habitation, Life, and Conduct of the Priests and *Religious* of *Hammon*, so very like the Convents and the Government of our Monks and *Religious*, that it ill accords with what History informs us of the time when the Monastick life began, and when it arrived to perfection.

What among so much obscurity seemsto me most probable is, that this is an ancient work, but later then the Apology.

For I find such a profound knowledge both in things, of Nature and of Art, so great acquaintance with the Annals of times past, so many curious remarks not taken from the Ancient Authors, which are left us, but which relate to and explain them, so much of the *Greek* Phrase, which one may discover thorow the translation, and over all a certain Character

acter of Antiquity, which cannot be counterfeited; so that I cannot be perswaded that it is any production of *Fume's*, whose Learning was but indifferent, or that the most able and ingenious person in those days could devise any thing like it; if *Phorius* have not mentioned him. How many other great and famous Authors have escaped his cognisance, or his diligence? and if in our days onely one Copy was found, which peradventure is since lost, how many other excellent works have undergone the same destiny? if this gives you not satisfaction, but you will oblige me to push further my conjectures, and essay to find out precisely the time he lived in, I have nothing to support my opinion, save one passage in the Preface of his Romance, where he complains of the fatal blow, which his Countrey *Athens* was about to receive in the universal desolation of  
*Greece;*

*Greece*, which cannot be understood, but of the *Scythians* irruption into *Greece*, which happened under the Empire of *Gallienus*, or else of that of *Alaric* King of the *Goths*, which fell out in the times of *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, for *Athens* was not sacked since *Sylla's* time, till the Invasion of the *Scythians*, which was about 350. years after, and that of the *Goths* was about 700 years after, but I see more reason to apply the words of the Author to the Conquest of *Alaric*, then to that of the *Scythians*, for that the *Scythians* were readily chased from *Athens* ere they had done much mischief, but the *Goths* treated them more rudely, and left there the sad marques of their barbarous cruelty. *Synesius* who lived at that time, speaks of them in the same terms with our Author, and with him regrets to see learning, & the liberal sciences wract by the Barbarians, in the very place  
of

of their Birth and Seat of their Empire ; but howsoever, this work of *Athenagoras* is invented with wit, conducted with Art, Sententious , and full of excellent moral Precepts, the events agreeing with verisimilitude, the *Episodes* drawn from the subject , the Characters clear and distinct, *Decorum* observed exactly all throughout , nothing low, nothing forced, or like the Pedant stile of the *Sophists*.

The argument is double , that which made one of the great Beauties of the ancient Comedy , for besides the Adventures of *Theogenes* and *Charidea* , he relates likewise those of *Phercydes* and *Melangenis* , whereby may appear the mistake of *Giraldi* , who believed that the multiplying of actions was the invention of the *Italians* ; the *Greeks* and our old *French* have practised this before the *Italians* , the *Greeks* with dependance and subordination to one principal action follow-

following the rules of an Heroick Poem, as *Athenagoras* has done, and *Heliodorus* too, though not so accurately, but our old *French* have multiplied them without any order, connexion, or art; these are them whom the *Italians* have imitated, taking from them their Romances and their faults together; and this is an error in *Giraldi* worse then the former, that he would endeavour to commend this fault, and make thereof a vertue, if it be true, which himself acknowledges that a Romance should resemble a perfect Body, and consist of many different parts and proportions, all under one head; it follows then that the principal action which is as it were, the head of a Romance should onely be one, and illustrious above the rest; and that the subordinate actions, which are as it were members, ought to have relation to this head, yield to it in dignity and beauty,

ty, adorn, sustain and attend it with dependance ; otherwise it would be a Body with many Heads, monstrous and deformed. The example of *Ovid* alledged in his favour, and that of other Cyclick Poets, which he might also cite, does not justifie him in the least, for the *Metamorphoses* of the ancient Fable, which *Ovid* proposed to himself to amass into one Poem, and those of the *Cyclick* Poets consisting all of actions, which have no dependance on or relation to one another, and being all well nigh of equal beauty and eminence, it was altogether as impossible to make thereof one regular Body, as to build one complete Structure with Sand only. The applause which the faulty Romances of his Nation have received, and which he relies so much upon, does yet justifie him less, one must not judge of a piece by the number, but by the sufficiency of the approba-

tors; every one assume to themselves the licence to judge and censure Poesie and Romance; the sumptuous Palaces and the common Streets are made Tribunals, where the merits of greatest works is Sovereignly decided.

There every one shoots his bolt, and presumes boldly to set the value of an *Epick* Poem upon the reading of a comparison or a description: and one Verse somewhat harsh, such as the place and matter sometimes requires, may there ruine the reputation of all, one happy thought or tender sentiment makes there the fortune of a Romance, and one expression a little forc't, or one superannuated word destroys it; but they who compose them will in no wise submit to these decisions; but like the Comedian in *Horace*, who being hissed from the Stage by the people, contented himself with the approbation of the Chevalliers. These are content that they  
please.

please the nicest and most able Judges, who have other kind of Laws to judge by; and these Laws are known to so very few, that as I often have said before, a good Judge is as rarely to be met withall as a good Romancer, or a good Poet: and that in the small number of those who understand and can judge of Prose; hardly one can be found who understands Poesie, or who is sensible and apprehends that Poesie and Prose are things altogether different. These Criticks, whose Sentence is the certain rule to value Poems and Romances by, did avow to *Giraldi*, that the *Italian* Romances have many very pretty things in them, and deserve many other commendations, but not that of regularity, contrivance, nor justness of design. I return to the Romance of *Athenagoras*, where the discovery of the plot, though without machine, is less happy then the rest; it goes not

of smartly enough, it presents it self before the passion and impatience of the Reader be sufficiently warmed, and is made with too much repetition; but his greatest fault is the unseasonable ostentation, wherewith he displays his skill in Architecture, what he writes thereof might be admirable elsewhere, but is vicious, and out of of its place where he puts it. *Ne doc anco il Poeta, saith Giraldi, nel descrivere le Fabrichu, volersi mostrare in guisa Architetto, che descrivendo troppo minutamente le cose a tale arte appartenenti, lasci quello che conviene al Poeta; alla quise cosa egli doe sovra ogni cosa mirare, se cerca loda, oltre che queste descriptioni di cose mechaniche recano con loro viltà, & sono lontane, & dall' uso, & dal grande dell' Heroico.* 'A Poet  
 'ought not in describing a Fabrick  
 'to shew himself an Architet; for  
 'in describing too minutely the particulars appertaining to such an art,  
 'he

‘ he leaves what is properly a Poets  
 ‘ work, which it concerns him prin-  
 ‘ cipally to look to, if he expect  
 ‘ commendation; besides, that such  
 ‘ mechanick descriptions debase the  
 ‘ work, are too mean and far below,  
 ‘ the grandeur and magnificence of  
 ‘ an Heroick Poem.

He has taken many things from  
*Heliodorus*, or *Heliodorus* from him; for  
 as I believe them contemporaries, I  
 know not to whether is due the glory  
 of the invention. The names and cha-  
 racters of *Theogenes* and *Chariclea* re-  
 semble those of *Theagenes* and *Chari-  
 riclea*. *Theogenes* and *Chariclea* see and  
 fall in love with each other at a Feast  
 of *Minerva*; as *Theagenes* and *Chari-  
 clea* at a Feast of *Apollo*. *Athenagoras*  
 makes one *Harondates* Governour of  
 the lower *Egypt*. *Heliodorus* makes  
*Oroondates* Governour of *Egypt*. *Athe-  
 nagoras* feigns *Theogenes* ready to be  
 Sacrificed by the *Scythians*. *Heliodorus*

makes *Theagenes* ready to be Sacrificed by the *Aethiopians*, and *Athenagoras* like *Heliodorus* has divided his work into ten Books.

I shall not put among the number of Romances the Books of *Paradoxes* of *Damascius*, the Heathen Philosopher, who lived under *Justinian*; for notwithstanding *Photius* saith, that he imitated *Antonius Diogenes*, the model of most *Greek* Romancers, 'tis to be understood that he writ like him Histories Fabulous and Incredible, but not Romantick, nor after the manner of Romances; he relating onely the apparitions of Spectres, and Goblins, and Events above Nature, either too lightly believed, or invented with little address, and becoming the Atheism and impiety of the Author.

Two years after *Damascius* was the History of *Barlaam* and *Josaphat* composed by St. *John Damascenus*. Many ancient Manuscripts father it on *John* the

the *Sinaite*, who lived in the time of *Theodosius*, but without reason as *Billius* makes it appear; because the disputes against the *Iconoclasts*, which are inserted in this work, were not then moved, nor were till long time after by the Emperour *Leon Isauricus*, under whom lived St. *John Damascenus*. 'Tis a Romance, but a Spiritual one; it treats of Love, but 'tis the love of God; and there one may find much blood spilt, but 'tis the blood of Martyrs: it is writ in the fashion of a History, not according to the rules of Romance, and notwithstanding that the verisimilitude is there exactly enough observed. It bears with it so many marks of Fiction, that it is not to be read but with some little discernment to discover it. In the rest one may perceive the fabulous *Genius* of the Authors Nation, by the great number of Parables, Comparisons and Similitudes,

which are there in abundance.

The Romance of *Theodorus Prodrumus*, and that which some attribute to *Eustathius* Bishop of *Thessalonica*, who flourished under the Empire of *Manuel Comines*, about the middle of the twelfth Age, are much what of the same nature: the first contains the Amours of *Dosicles* and *Rhodanthe*, the other, those of *Asmenas* and *Ismene*. Monsieur *Gaulmen* has made both of them publick together with his translation and notes. Seeing he saith nothing of *Eustathius* in the Preface of the Book which bears his Name, I will interpret his silence in his favour; and believe that being a Learned Man, he fell not into the error of those who are perswaded that the famous Comentator upon *Homer* was capable of making such a miserable work as that is. Moreover some Manuscripts name the Author *Eumathius*, and not *Eustathius*; however the

the matter be, nothing is more frigid, nothing more flat, nothing more tedious, no decorum, no verisimilitude, no conduct; 'tis the work of some School Boy, or some wretched Pedagogue, who deserved to be a School Boy all the days of his life. *Theodorus Prodromus* is not much better, however he has something more of art though it be but little, he never extricates himself unless it be by machines, and he understands not how to make the Actors preserve decorum, and the uniformity of their Characters. His work is rather a Poem than a Romance, for it is writ in Verse, and this makes his style (which is too licentious and full of Figures) more pardonable; nevertheless seeing his Verses are *Iambicks*, which are like Prose, and which may be called measured Prose, I exclude him not from this last. Some say he was a *Russian* by Nation, a Priest, a Poet, a Philosopher, and a Physitian.

I give well nigh the same judgement of *Longus* the Sophist his Pastorals, as of the two former Romances; for notwithstanding that most of the Learned of late times have commended them for their elegance, and agreement joyned with a simplicity proper for the Subject; nevertheless I find nothing in all this but a simplicity, which runs sometimes even to childishness and foolery. There is nothing in it, either of invention or conduct. He begins grossly with the Birth of his Shepherds, and ends with their Marriage; he never clears up his Adventures but by Machines, improper and ill contrived; so obscene for the rest, that one must be somewhat a Cynick to read him without blushing. His style, which has been so much cryed up, is such as may be deservedlesse: tis the style of a Sophist, such as he was; like that of *Eustathius* and *Theodorus Prodromus*; which par-  
takes

takes of the *Orator* and the *Historian*, and which is proper neither to the one nor to the other ; full of *Metaphors*, *Antitheses*, and sparkling *Figures*, which dazle and surprize the simple, and tickle the Ear, without satisfying the mind ; in leju of ingaging the Reader by the novelty of the events, by the arangement and variety of matter, and by a clear and close Narration, which withall has its cadence, goes off roundly, and which always advanceth within the subject. He assays(as most of other *Sophists*) to entertain him with descriptions by the by ; he leads him out of the way, and while he lets him see so much of the Countrey which he did not look for, he spends and consumes his attention, and the impatience he had to arrive at the end he sought for and proposed to himself. I translated this Romance with delight in my Childhood, and it is that age only

ly which it can please: I shall not tell you in what time he lived; none of the Ancients have made mention of him, and he bears no token which may give place for conjectures, unless perhaps it be the purity of his style, which makes me judge him more ancient then the two former.

For the three *Xenophons* Roman-cers, whereof *Suidas* speaks, I can say no more of them then he has done: one of them was of *Antioch*, an other of *Ephesus*, the third of *Cyprus*. All three writ Love stories: the first gave his Book the name of *Babylonicks*, as *Iamblicus*: the second Intitled his the *Ephesiacks*, and relates the Amours of *Habrecomas* and *Anthea*: and the third named his the *Cypriacks*, where he recounts the Amours of *Cinyras*, *Myrrha*, and *Adonis*.

I ought not to forget *Parthenius* of *Nicaa*, from whom we have a collection of love Histories, which he  
Dedi-

Dedicates to the Poet *Cornelius Gallus* of *Augustus* his time. Many of them are drawn from the ancient Fable, and all from ancient Authors which he cites. Some of them seem Roman-tick, and to have been taken from *Milesian* Fables; as that of *Erippe* and *Zanthus* in the 8th. Chapter, that of *Policrites* and *Deognete* in the 9th. Chapter, that of *Lucone* and *Cyonippe* in the 10th. Chapter, and that of *Nearo* and *Hypsicleon*, and of *Promedon* in the 18th. Chapter, for besides that these Adventures are attributed to *Milesian* persons, it doth not at all appear that they have been taken either from the Fable or ancient History. The same may be said of the Amours of *Cannus* and *Biblis*, children of the Founder of *Miletus*, which he reports in the 11th. Chapter, are a Fiction of the Countries, which has made it famous, and has been consecrated in the Antique Mythology.

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This however I offer only as a slight conjecture.

In this account which I make, I distinguish the regular Romances from those which are not. I call regular those which are according to the rules of an Heroick Poem. The *Greeks* who have so happily improved most of Arts and Sciences, that one may account them the Inventors, have also cultivated the art of making Romances, and from rude and wild as it was among the *Oriental*s, they have given it a better shape, adjusting it to the rules of the *Epopée*, and joyning in one complete body the diverse parts, which without order or harmony composed the Romances of former times. Of all the *Greek* Romancers which I have named, they who have observed these rules are onely *Antonius*, *Diogenes*, *Lucian*, *Athenagoras*, *Iamblicus*, *Heliodorus*, *Achilles Tatius*, *Eusebathius*, and *Theodorus*  
*Prodo-*

*Prodromus*. I do not mention *Lucius* of *Patras*, nor *Damascius*, whom I have not ranked among the makers of Romances; for *St. John Damascenus* and *Longus*, it had been easie for them to have reduced their works under these Laws, but they either were ignorant of them, or despised them. I know not what to say of the three *Xenophons*, of whom nothing is left us: neither of *Aristides*, and those who like him writ the *Milesian Fables*. I believe however that these later were tyed to some rules and measures, which I judge by the works made in their imitation, which time has preserved us, as the *Metamorphosis* of *Apuleus*, which is regular enough.

These *Milesian Fables*, long time before they made this Progress in *Greece* which you have seen, were already passed into *Italy*, and were there first received by the *Sybarites*, a people more Voluptuous then one can imagine.

gine. This conformity of humour which they had with the *Milesians*, established among them a reciprocal commerce of luxury and pleasure; and united them so well, that *Herodotus* assures us, he knew no people so strictly allied; they then learned of the *Milesians* the art of Fictions; and *Sybaritick* Fables were as common in *Italy*, as the *Milesian* Fables were in *Asia*; it is not ealie to say what was their model, *Hesychius* gives us to understand in one passage very much corrupted, that *Æsop* being in *Italy*, his Fables there were so well approved, that they did improve upon them, and named them *Sybariticks* when they were changed, and they became a Proverb: but he discovers not wherein consisted that alteration. *Suidas* believed that they were like those of *Æsop*; he is mistaken in this as frequently else where. The old Comentator upon *Aristophanes* saith, that

that the *Sabarites* made use of Beasts in their Fables, and *Aesop* made use of men in his; this passage is certainly corrupted, for as it appears that *Aesop's* Fables imployed Beasts, it follows that those of the *Sybarites* made use of Men: and thus too he saith in an other place in expresse terms; those of the *Sybarites* were pleasant and provoked laughter. I find a piece of one of them in *Eliau*: 'tis a little story which he saith he took from the History of the *Sybarites*, that is to say, as I take it, from the *Sybaritick* Fables, you may judge there of by the story it self.

A Child of *Sybaris* going to School along with his School-Master met in the Street one that sold Figgs, and stole from him one of them; the Schoolmaster sharply reproving him, snatches the Fig from him, & eats it.

But these Fables were not onely facetious but smutty withall. *Ovid*

puts the *Sybaritida*, which was composed some little time before him, among the number of the most lascivious pieces. Many Learned Men believe that he intends the work of *Hemitheon* the *Sybarite*, whereof *Lucian* speaks, as of a mass of smuttiness: this appears to me without ground, for one cannot at all perceive that the *Sybaritida* did any other wise agree with the Book of *Hemitheon*, then in this; that both the one and the other were Books of Debauchery; and this was common to all the *Sybaritick* Fables. Besides this the *Sybaritida* was made but a little before *Ovids* time; whereas the Town of *Sybares* was absolutely ruined, by the *Crotoniates* 500 years before him. 'Tis therefore more credible that this *Sybaritida* was composed by some *Roman* and so called, because it was made in imitation of the ancient *Sybaritick* Fables. A certain old Author, whose name I believe

believe you do not much value, gives us to understand that their style was curt and *Laconick*; but all this doth not convince us that these Fables had nothing of the Romance in them.

This passage of *Ovid* makes it clear, that in his time the *Romans* had given admittance to the Fables of the *Sybarites* amongst them: and he teaches us in the same Book, that the famous Historian *Sisenna* had also translated for them the *Milesian* Fables of *Aristides*. This *Sisenna* lived in *Sylla's* time, and was with him of the great and Illustrious Family of the *Cornelians*: He was Prætor of *Sicily* and *Acacia*; he writ the History of his Countrey, and was preferred before all Historians of his Nation, who went before him.

If the *Roman* Republick disdeigned not the reading of these Fables then, while it yet retained an austere Discipline and rigid manners; 'tis no won-

der if being fallen under the power of the Emperours, and after their example being abandoned to luxury and pleasures, it was likewise toucht with those which Romances gave the mind. *Virgil*, who lived a little after the first rise of the Empire, gives not any more agreeable diversion to the *Naiades*, Daughters of the River *Peneus*, while they were assembled together under their Fathers Waters, then to relate the Amours of the Gods, which were the Subject of the Romances of Antiquity.

And *Ovid*, *Virgil*s contemporary, makes the Daughters of *Memius* tell Romantick Tales; and while their hands were busie and employed, their tongues and wit were at liberty. The first is of the Loves of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*; the second of those of *Mars* and *Venus*; the third of those of *Salmacis* for *Hermaphrodite*.

By this appears the esteem *Rome* heretofore had for Romances, which  
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is yet more clear by the Romance which *Petronius* (one of their Consuls, and the most polished man of his time) composed; he made it in form of a *Satyr*, of that kind which *Varro* had invented, intermixing agreeably Prose with Verse, and the serious with the jocose, the which he named *Menippian*; because *Menippus* before him had treated of grave matters, in a pleasant and scoffing style.

This *Satyr* of *Petronius* fails not to be a true Romance; it contains nothing but agreeable and ingenious Fictions, but very often too wanton and immodest. Hiding under the bark a fine and tart raillery against the vices of *Nero's* Court. Seeing what remains of it are onely some fragments, which scarce have any coherence at all one with another, or rather the collections of some industrious person; one cannot exactly discern the form and tissue of the

whole piece, nevertheless it appears to be conducted with order. And 'tis probable the incoherent parts would make up a complete body with those that are wanting. Though *Petronius* seems to be a very great Critick, and of an exquisite taste in learning, his style does not always altogether answer to the delicatness of his judgement; something of affectation may be observed; he is somewhat too much Painted and Studied, and degenerates from that natural and majestick simplicity of the happy age of *Augustus*. So true is it that the art of speaking, which all the World practises (and which so very few understand) is yet much easier to understand then to practise well.

Some say that the Poet *Lucan*, who also lived in *Nero's* time, composed *Satirick* Fables, that is (as some think) fables wherein are recounted the loves of *Satyrs* and *Nymphs*. This agrees well with

with a Romance, and the wit of that Age, which was Romantick confirms my suspicion. But in regard nothing is left us but the Title, and that too does not clearly enough express the nature of the piece, I shall say nothing thereof.

The *Metamorphosis* of *Apuleus*, so well known under the Title of the *Golden Ass*, was made under the *Antonin*. It had the same Original with the *Ass* of *Lucian*, being taken out of the two first Books of the *Metamorphoses* of *Lucius* of *Patras*, with this difference always, that these Books were abridged by *Lucian*, and augmented by *Apuleus*. The work of this Philosopher is regular, for notwithstanding he seems to begin with his infancy, yet what is there said is onely by way of Preface, and to excuse the Barbarousness of his style. The true beginning of his History is at his Voyage into *Thessalia*. He has

given us an *Idea* of the *Milesian Fables* in this piece, which he declares withall to be of that sort; he has enriched it with pretty *Episodes*, and among others with that of *Psyche*, which no person is ignorant of; and he has not at all retrencht the smutti-ness which was in the Originals which he had followed. His style is that of a Sophist, full of affectation and violent figures, hard, barbarous, and besitting an *African*.

Some hold that *Clodius Albinus*, one of the pretenders to the Empire, who was vanquishd and slain by the Emperour *Severus*, disdained not a like travail. *Julius Capitolinus* reports in his life, that there were seen certain *Milesian Fables* under his name, greatly esteemed, though but indifferently written; and that *Severus* reproch- ed the Senate, that they had com- mended him for a Learned Man, whereas he read nothing but the *Mile-  
sian*

*lian* Fables of *Apuleius*, and spent all his Study in old Wives tales and such like trifles, which he preferred before serious employments.

*Martianus Capella* has (as *Petronius*) given the name of *Satyr* to his work, for that it is writ like his in Verse and Prose; and that the profitable and the agreeable are there interwoven; having design to treat of all those which are called the Liberal Arts, he therefore takes a circumference, giving them persons; and feigning that *Mercury*, who has them in his Train, Espones *Philology*, that is to say, the love of good Letters, and gives her for a Nuptial present whatever they have most fair and most precious; so that it is a continual Allegory, which properly deserves not the name of a Romance, but rather of a Fable: for as I have already remarked, a Fable represents things which never have nor ever can happen; and a  
Romance

Romance represents things which may, but never have happened. The artifice of this Allegory is not very subtil; the style is barbarisme it self; so bold and so extravagant in his figures, that they were not to be pardoned the most desperate Poet; and covered with an obscurity so thick, that it is hardly intelligible: otherwise it is Learned and full of Notions which are not common.

Some write that the Author was an *African*, if he were not he might well be one, his manner of writing is so harsh and forced. The time wherein he lived is not known, it onely appears he was more ancient then *Fu-  
stinian*.

Hitherto the Art of Romancing was maintained with some splendour, but it declined afterwards with Learning and the Empire, when these boysterous Nations of the *North* carried every where with them their ignorance

norance and barbarity. Before Romances were made for delight ; now were devised fabulous Histories , because none were acquainted with the Truth. *Talieffin*, who is said to have lived about the middle of the sixth Age , under that King *Arthur* so famous in Romances , and *Melkin* who was somewhat younger, writ the History of *England*, their Countrey , of King *Arthur*, and of the round Table. *Balaus*, who has put them in his Catalogue, speaks of them as of Authors filled with Fables. The same may be said of *Hunibaldus Francus*, who was (as some write) contemporary of *Clouis* , and whose History is no other but a mass of lyes grossly conceived.

In fine, Sir, we come to the famous Book of the exploits of *Charlemagne*, which some ascribe very untowardly to the Archbishop *Turpin*, though he be later then it by more then two hun-

hundred years. *Pigna* and some others have believed ridiculously, that Romances took their name from the Town of *Reims*, whereof he was Archbishop, for that his Book (as *Pigna* reports) was the Source from whence the Romances of *Provence* chiefly issued; and that he was according to others the principal among the makers of Romances.

However there are to be seen many Histories of *Charlemagnes* life full of extravagant Fables, and like that which bears the name of *Turpin*. Such were the Histories attributed to *Harcon*, and to *Solcon Forteman*; to *Savard the Sage*, to *Adell Adeling*, and to *John* Son of the King of *Freezland*, all five *Freezlanders*; and who are also said to have lived in the time of *Charlemagne*. Such also was the History attributed to *Ocon*, who according to the common opinion was Contemporary of *Otho the Great*, and had

had *Solcon* before named to his great Uncle. And such were those which contain the Atchievements of King *Arthur*, and the Life of *Merlin*. These Histories composed for delight pleased the Readers, who were simple and more ignorant then those who made them; they did not in those days trouble themselves in the researches after good Memoires, and in being informed of the truth for writing of Histories. They had the stuff in their own head, and went no farther then their own invention. Thus Historians degenerated into true Romancers. In this Age of ignorance the Latine Tongue too as well as truth was despised. The Versifiers, Composers, Inventors of Tales, Jest-ers, and in fine those of this Countrey who studied that which was there called the *Gay Science*, did begin about the time of *Hugh Capet* to Romance it pell mell, and over run  
*France,*

*France*, giving about their *Romances*, and *Fables* composed in the *Roman* Tongue; for heretofore those of *Provence* had more of Learning and Poësie among them; then all *France* besides. This *Roman* Tongue was that which the *Romans* introduced among the *Gauls* together with their Conquests; and which being corrupted by the times with a mixture of the *Gaulish* Language which was before, and then *French* or *Tudesque* which followed, 'twas neither *Latin*, *Gaulish*, nor *French*, but a certain medley of all, wherein *Latin* however was predominant; the which for that reason was always called the *Roman*, to distinguish it from the particular and natural Language of each Countrey, as the *French*, *Gaulish* or *Celtique*, *Aquitannique*, *Belgique*; for *Cæsar* writs that these three Languages were different among themselves, which *Strabo* explains of a difference, which only was

as the diverse dialects of the same Language.

The *Spaniard* use the word *Romancé* in the same signification with us, and they call their ordinary language *Romancé*; the *Romain* being then most universally understood, those of *Provence* who Studied Fictions made use thereof for their Fictions, which from thence were called Romances. The Versifiers also traveling about the Countrey, were bountifully rewarded for their labours, and nobly entertained by Lords, whom they made visits to; somewhereof would be so transported with delight to hear them, that they sometimes would even despoil themselves of their Robes to adorn the Versifiers therewithall. Those of *Provence* were not the onely persons who delighted in this agreeable exercise: almost every Province of *France* had their Romancers, even to *Picardy*, where were composed their  
their

their *Servantois*, pieces treating of Love, and sometimes Satyrical: and from thence come so very many of old Romances, whereof some part are Printed, others are rotting in Libraries, the rest consumed by the length of time. *Spain* it self, which has been so fruitful in Romances, and *Italy* too, have from us received the art of composing them. *Mi par di poter dire che questa sorte di Poesia:* These are the words of *Giraldi* speaking of Romances. *Habbia haunta la prima Origine, & il primo suo principio da Francesi, da i quali ha forse onco haveto il nome. Da Francési pio e passata questa maniera di peteggiare a gli Spagnuoli, & ultimamente e stata accettata da gli Italiani.* 'So that I may  
 'say this sort of Poesie has had its first  
 'Original and Source from the  
 'French, and from them peradventure took the name. From the French  
 'afterwards this kind of Poetizing  
 'passed

' passed to the *Spaniards*, and lastly  
' was entertained by the *Italians*.

The late *Salmasius*, whose memorie I have in singular veneration, both for his great Learning, and for the friendship which was contracted between us, was of opinion that *Spain* having learned of the *Arabians* the art of making Romances, did afterwards communicate it by their example to all the rest of *Europe*. To maintain this one must hold that *Taliessin* and *Melkin* both *English*, and *Hunnibaldus Francus*, (which three are believed to have composed their Romantick Histories about the year 550) are more recent by at least about 200 years then can be imagined. For the revolt of *Comte Julian*, and entrance of the *Arabians* into *Spain*, happened not till 91 of the *Hegira*, that is to say, the 712 year of our Lord; and some time must be allowed for these Romances of the *Arabians* to spread in

*Spain*, and for those which (as is pretended) the *Spaniards* made in their imitation to be dispersed throughout the rest of *Europe*. I shall not take upon me to maintain the antiquity of these Authors, though I have some right so to do, seeing the common and received opinion is for me. 'Tis certain that the *Arabians* were extremely addicted (as I have made appear) to the *Gay Science*, I mean to Poësie, Fables, and Fictions. This Science having continued with them while it was rude, without having been improved and cultivated by the *Greeks*. They brought it along with their Arms into *Africa* when they subdued it; though besides it had always flourished among the *Africans*; For *Aristotle* and after him *Priscian* make mention of the *Lybick Fables*; and the Romances of *Apuleius* and *Martianus Capella* *Africans*, whereof I before have spoken, shew that it was the  
 wit

wit of these people; and this con-  
 duced much to the fortifying of the  
 victorious *Arabians* in their inclina-  
 tion. We likewise learn out of *Leo*,  
*Afer* and *Marmol*, that the *African A-*  
*rabians* do still passionately love Ro-  
 mantick Poesie, and that they sing in  
 Verse and Prose the exploits of their  
*Bubalub*, as among us are celebrated  
 those of *Arthur* and *Lancelot*; that  
 their *Morabites* compose Love Ditties,  
 that in *Fex* on *Mahumets* Birth-day  
 the Poets have their assemblies and  
 publick sports, and repeat their Verses  
 before the people; and who in their  
 judgement had done best, is created  
 Prince of the Poets for that year;  
 that the Kings of the House of the  
*Benimerinis*, who have Reigned this  
 three hundred years, and which our  
 old Writers call *Bellemarine*, assemble  
 on a certain day every year the most  
 able Judges in the City of *Fex*, and  
 makes them a most spendid Feast, af-

ter which the Poets repeat their Verses in honour of *Mahomet*; that the King bestows on him who excels the rest a sum of Money, a Horse, a Slave, and his own Robes, which he wore that day; and that none of the rest return home without recompence.

*Spain* having received the yolk of the *Arabians* learned withall their manners, and took from them the custom of singing love Verses, and celebrating the actions of great Men after the fashion of the Bards among the *Gauls*; but these Songs which they named *Romances*, were much different from what is called a Romance, for they were Poesies made to be Sung, and consequently very short. Some have made a collection of many of them, some whereof are so Ancient, that they can hardly be understood; and they have sometimes served to clear up, and explain the  
Histo-

## and their Original. 85

Histories of *Spain*, and to reduce the events to order in Chronology. Their *Romances* are much later, and the ancientest of them are of nothing so old a date as our *Sir Tristrams* and *Lancelots*. For some Centuries of years *Miguel de Cervante*, one of the best wits *Spain* has produced, made a fine and judicious Critique in his *Don Quixot*; and hardly could the *Curate* of the *Marcha*, and *Maistre Nicolas* the *Barber*, find in so vast a number six which were worthy to be preserved; the rest are delivered over to the secular arm of the old Wife, to be put in the fire. Those which they judged worth the keeping, were the four Books of *Amadis de Gaul*, which is said to be the first Romance of Chivalry, which was Printed in *Spain*, the model and best of all the other.

*Palmerin of England*, which some believe was composed by a King of *Portugal*, and which they judge worthy

to be put in a Box, like that of *Darius*, wherein *Alexander* kept the Works of *Homer*. *Don Belouis*, the Mirrour of Chivalry: *Tirame the White*, and *Kyrie Eleison of Montauban*, (for in the good old times it was believed that *Kyrie Eleison* and *Poralipomenon* were the names of some Saints) where the subtleties of *Madam Pleasure-of-my-Life*, with the Love and Guyles of *Widow Reposada* are highly extolled. But all this is but of yesterday in comparison of our old Romances, which in all probability were the Models and Originals of them, as the conformity of the works and vicinity of the Nations may perswade. He also gives his censure upon the Romances in Verse, and other Poesies which were found in the Library of *Don Quixot*; but this is beside our Subject.

If any object that as we took from the *Arabians* the art of Ryming, 'tis credible

credible that we had from them also the Art of Romancing : seeing that the most part of our old Romances were in ryme, and that the custom of the *French* Lords, to give their Vestments to the best Poets, and which *Marmel* saith was practised by the Kings of *Fræ*, gives yet more ground for this suspicion. I allow that it is not altogether impossible that the *French* learned rime of the *Arabians*, having taken from them likewise the usage of applying it to Romances. I allow also that the love we then had for Fables, might be augmented and fortified by their example, and that our art Romantick was (it may be) enriched by the Commerce which the Neighbourhood of *Spain*, and the Wars gave us with them : but not at all that we are indebted to them for this inclination, seeing that it possessed us long time before it was taken notice of in *Spain* ; neither can I more

believe that the Princes of *France* took from the *Arabian* Kings that custom of despoiling themselves of their Garments in favour of the *Poets*. I rather think, that both the one and the other touched with the excellence of the works they heard repeated, they could not hold from exerting their liberality immediately, and finding nothing more near or ready than their habits, they made use of them for that occasion: as we read of some Saints, who have done the like for the poor; and that this which often came to pass in *France* by accident, is practised every year at *Fez* by custom, probably was there too at first introduced by chance only.

It is very credible that the *Italians* were first brought to the composing of Romances, by the example of those in *Provence*, then when the Popes held their Sea at *Avignon*; and even by the example of other *French*, then when

when the *Normans* and *Charles Comte d'Anjou* (Brother to *Saint Louis*) a virtuous Prince, a lover of Poësie, and a Poet himself, made War in *Italy*; for the *Normans* also would be tampering with the *Gay Science*. And History reports, that they sung the deeds of *Roland* before they gave that memorable Battail, which won the Crown of *England* to *William the Bastard*. All *Europe* in those days was covered with darkness and thick ignorance; but *France*, *England*, and *Germany* less then *Italy*, which then produced but a small number of Writers, and scarce any makers of Romances at all. Those of that Countrey, who had a mind to make themselves distinguished by some tincture of knowledge, came for it to the University of *Paris*; which was the mother of Sciences, and Nource of the Learned of *Europe*. *St. Thomas Aquinas*, *St. Bonaventure*, the Poet *Danſe*, and *Bocace* came thither

ther to Study, and the President *Fauchet* shews that this last took most part of his Novels from *French Romances*; and that *Petrarch* and the other *Italian Poets* have pilfered the richest phantasies and conceits from the Songs of *Thibaud King of Navar*, from *Gaces Brusse*, *Chastelain de Corcy*, and the old *French Romancers*. 'Twas then in my opinion, in this mixture of the two Nations, that the *Italians* learned from us the Science of *Romances*, which by their own confession they owe to us as well as the Science of rimes.

Thus *Spain* and *Italy* had from us an art, which was the fruit of our ignorance and rudeness, and which the politeness of the *Persians*, *Ionians*, and *Greeks* had produced. In effect as in necessity to preserve our lives wanting Bread, we nourish our Bodies with herbs and roots; so when the knowledge of truth, which is the prope  
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and natural Food of the mind begins to fail us, we nourish it with Lies, which are the imitation of truth; and as in plenty to satisfy our pleasure, we often quit Bread and our ordinary Viands, for Ragousts. Thus when our minds are acquainted with the truth, they often forsake the Study and speculation thereof, to be diverted with the Image of Truth, which is Fiction; for the Image and imitation according to *Aristotle*, are often more agreeable, than the truth it self; so that two Paths directly opposite, which are ignorance and learning, rudeness and politeness often carry Men to one and the same end, which is the Study of Fictions, Fables, and Romances. Hence it is that the most Barbarous Nations love Romantick inventions, as well as those which are the most polish'd. The Origines of all the Savages of *America*, and particularly those of *Peru*, contain nothing

nothing but Fables ; no otherwise then the Origines of the *Goths*, which they writ heretofore in their ancient *Runic* Characters upon great stones ; whereof I have seen some remains in *Denmark*. And if ought were left us of those Works which the *Bards* among the Ancient *Gauls* composed to eternise the memory of their Nation, I question not at all but we should find them inricht with abundance of Fictions.

This inclination to Fables, which is common to all Men, is not the result of ratiocination, imitation or custom. 'Tis natural to them, and has its bait in the very frame and disposition of their mind and soul ; for the desire to know and to learn is particular to man, and no less does distinguish him from other creatures then his reason. One may find even in other creatures some sparks of a rude and imperfect reason ; but the coveting

covering of knowledge was never observed, save in Man only.

This proceeds (according to my sense) from that, that the faculties of our Soul being of too vast an extent, and of a capacity too large to be filled by the present objects; the Soul does ransack and search in what is past, and what is to come, in truth and in fictions, in imaginary spaces and in impossibility, for wherewith to exercise and employ it. *Brutes* find in the objects which present themselves to their sense wherewith to satisfy the powers of their Soul, and are not concerned further; so that one sees not in them this restless desire which agitates incessantly the mind of Men, and carries it to the research of new knowledge; to proportion (if possible) the object to the faculty, and find there a pleasure resembling, that we enjoy in appeasing a violent hunger, or quenching a long thirst.

thirst. 'Tis this *Plato* would express by the Fable of the Marriage of *Porus* and *Penia*, that is to say, *Riches* and *Poverty*, whereof he saith, is born pleasure, the object is signified by *Riches*, which are not riches but in the usage, and otherwise remain unfruitful, and in no wise beget pleasure. The faculty is intended by *Poverty*, which is sterile, and always attended with inquietude, while it is separated from *Riches*; but when it is joyned thereunto, pleasure is the issue of this union. All this we meet withall exactly in our soul; *Poverty*, that is to say, ignorance is natural to it, and it sighs continually after Science, which is its riches; which when it is possessed of, this enjoyment is followed by pleasure; but this pleasure is not always equal, it often costeth it much pains and travail; as when the soul applyes it self to difficult speculations, and occult Sciences,  
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the matter whereof is not present to our senses, and where the imagination which acts with facility has a less part than the understanding whose operations are more laborious ; and for that labour is naturally irksome to us, the soul is not carryed to hard and spinous learning ; unless in prospect of the fruits, or in hopes of a remote pleasure, or else by necessity ; but the knowledge which attracts the soul and delights it most, is that which is acquired without pain, and where the imagination (in a manner) alone does act, and on matters like those, which fall ordinarily under our sense, and especially if this knowledge excites our passions, which are the great movers in all the actions of our life. Such are these Romances ; there is required no great contention or torment of the mind to comprehend them. No long reasonings to be made, nor the memory over-burthend,

end, nothing is required but the phancy; imagine onely and 'tis enough. They move not our passions, save onely to appease them; they stir not our fear or compassion, but to make us see out of danger or misery those we feared or complained for; they touch not our tenderness, but to let us see them happy we had a love and tenderness for. Finally, all of our passions find themselves there agreeably provoked and calmed. 'Tis therefore that they who act more by passion then by reason, and travail more with their imagination then their understanding, are most taken therewith; though these other are so too, but after another manner. These are touched with the beauties of Art, and that which proceeds from the intellect; but the former such as are children and the simple, are sensible onely of that which strikes their imagination, and  
stirs

stirs their passions, & they love fictions in themselves, without looking further. Now Fictions being nothing but narrations, true in appearance and false in effect; the minds of the simple, who discern only the bark, are pleased with this show of truth, and very well satisfied. But these who penetrate further, and see into the solid, are easily disgusted with this falsity, so that the first love the falsehood, because it is concealed under an appearance of truth; these others are distasted with this Image of truth, by reason of the real falsehood, which is couched under it; if this falsehood be not otherwise ingenious, mysterious, and instructive, and buoys it self up by the excellence of the invention and art. And *S. Augustin* saith somewhere, that these falsities which are significative, and couch a hidden meaning, are not lyes, but the Figures of truth, which the most Sage and Holy persons,

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sons, and our Saviour himself have made use on upon occasion.

Since then 'tis true that lyes ordinarily flow from ignorance, and the grossness of our intellectuals, and that this inundation of the Barbarians, who issued from the *North*, spread over all *Europe*, and plunged it in so profound an ignorance, as it could not clear it self from, till after two Ages or thereabouts, is it not then very probable that this ignorance caused the same effect in *Europe*, which it always had produced every where besides; and is it not in vain to seek for that in chance, which we find in nature? there is then no reason to contend, but that *French*, *German*, and *English* Romances, and all the Fables of the *North* are of the Countrey's growth, born upon the place, and not imported from elsewhere; that they never had other Original then the Histories stuff with falsities,

falsities, and made in obscure and ignorant times, when there was neither industry nor curiosity to discover the truth of things, nor art for describing it: that these Histories mixed with true and false, having been well received by the rude and half-barbarous people; the Historians thereupon took the boldness to present them such as were purely forged, which are the Romances. 'Tis also a common opinion that the name of Romance has been heretofore given to Histories, and was applyed afterwards to Fictions; which is an irrefragable testimony, that the one has come from the others *Romanzi*, saith *Pigna*, *secondo la commune opinione in Francese detti erano gli annali*, & perciò le Guerre di parte in parte notate sotto questo nome usavano, postia alcuni dalla verità partendosi, quantunque favoleggiassero, così appunto chiamorono li scritti loro. 'Romances according to the common opinion in

‘*France* were the *Annals* ; and for  
‘that the *History* of the *War* publish-  
‘ed part after part had that Name,  
‘some afterwards who neglected the  
‘truth ; howsoever *Fabulous* they  
‘were , gave their writings also the  
‘same Title.

*Strabo* in a passage I have already  
alleged , saith that the *Histories* of  
the *Persians*, *Medes*, and *Syrians* have  
not deserved much credit ; for that  
those who writ them, seeing that the  
*Inventors* of *Fables* were in great  
esteem , believed they might be so  
too , by writing of *Fables* in the  
form of *Histories*, that is to say, *Romances* : whence one may conclude  
that *Romances*, according to all ap-  
pearances and likelyhood have among  
us had the same *Original* , which they  
had heretofore among these people.

But to return to the *Troubadours* or  
*Trouverres* [so were called these Poets]  
of *Provence* , who were the *Princes* of  
Ro-

Romancery in *France*, about the end of the tenth Age, their mystery was so generally approved of, that all the Provinces of *France*, as I have said, had also their *Trouverres*. They produced in the eleventh Age a matchless multitude of Romances, both in Prose and Verse, many whereof maugre the envy of time, are preserved even to our days. Of this number were the Romances of *Garin le Loheran*, of *Tristram*, of *Lancelot du Lake*, of *Bertain*, of *St. Greal*, of *Merlyn*, of *Arthur*, of *Perceval*, of *Perceforest*, and of most part of those 127 Poets, who lived before the year 1300. of whom the President *Fauchet* has given his censure. I shall not undertake to make you a Catalogue of them, nor examine whether the *Amadis de Gaul* be Originally from *Spain*, *Flanders*, or *France*, and whether the Romance of *Tiel Ulespiegel* be a Translation from the *German*, nor in what lan-

guage the Romance of the seven wise Men of Greece was first written, or that of *Dolopathos*; which some say was taken from the parables of *Sandabar* the Indian: some say likewise that it is to be found in Greek in some Libraries; which has furnished the matter of an Italian Book called *Erastus*, and of many of *Bocace* his Novels, as the same *Faucher* has remarked: which was writ in Latin by *John Montk*, of the Abbaye *Hauteselue*, whereof ancient Copies are to be seen; and Translated into French by the Clerk *Hebert*, about the end of the twelfth Age, and into High Dutch about 300 years after; and after an hundred years more, from High Dutch into Latin again by a Learned person, who changed the Names thereof, and was ignorant that the Dutch had come from the Latin. It will suffice that I tell you all these works, to which ignorance has given Birth, did bear along with them the marks

marks of their Original, and were no other then a fardle of Fictions grossly huddled together without head or foot, and infinitely short of that Sovereign degree of Art and Elegance, whereunto the *French* Nation has afterwards brought Romances. 'Tis truely a subject of wonder, that having yielded to others the Bayes for Epick Poesie and History, we have carried these to so high a pitch, that the best of their Romances do not equal the very meanest of ours.

We owe I believe this advantage to the refinement and politness of our Galantry; which proceeds (in my opinion) from the great liberty in which the Men in *France* live with the Women: these are in a manner recluses in *Italy* and *Spain*, and are separated from Men by so many obstacles, that they are scarce to be seen, and not to be spoken with at all. Wherefore Men have there neglected

the art of cajoling them agreeably, because the occasions for it are so rare. All the study and business there is to surmount the difficulties of access ; and this being effected, they make use of the time without amusing themselves with forms. But in *France* the Dames go at large upon their Parole ; and being under no custody, but that of their own heart, make thereof a Fort more strong and sure than all the Keys and Grates, and all the vigilance of the *Donagnas*. The Men hereby are obliged to lay a formal Siege to this Fort, and imploy so much industry and address to reduce it, that they have made thereof an art, which scarce is known to other people. 'Tis this art which distinguishes the *French* from other Romances, and which renders the reading of them so delicious, that they have caused the more profitable reading to be neglected. The Dames  
were

were the first taken with this bait: These made Romances their whole study, and have so despised that of the ancient Fable and History, that they now no longer understand those works, from which they formerly received their chiefest accomplishment; that they may not blush at this ignorance, which they so often find themselves guilty of, they perceive that they had better disapprove what they are ignorant of, then take the pains to learn it. The Men have imitated them, in complaisance, and have condemned what they condemned, and called Pedantry that which made an essential part of politeness, even in *Malherbe's* time. The Poets and other *French* Writers who succeeded, have been constrained to submit to this judgement; and many among them seeing that the knowledge of antiquity was of no advantage to them, have ceased to study what they

durst

durst no longer practise. Thus a good cause has produced a very ill effect, and the beauty of our Romances has drawn on the contempt of good Letters, and consequently ignorance.

Not that I pretend for all this to condemn the reading of them. The best things in the World are attended always, with their inconveniences. Romances may have much worse too than ignorance. I know what they are accused for: they drain our devotion, they inspire as with irregular passions, and corrupt our manners. All this may be, and sometimes does happen. But what cannot evil and untoward minds make a bad use on? weak souls are even contagious to themselves, and make poyson of every thing: Histories must be forbidden, which relates so many pernicious examples, and the Fable, for there crimes are authorized even by the example of the Gods. A Marble Statue which  
made

made the publick Devotion among the Heathens, caused the passion, brutality and the despair of a certain young man. *Cherea* in *Torence* fortifies himself in a criminal dissign, at the sight of a Picture of *Jupiters*, which may be, drew the respect of all other spectatours. Little regard was had to the sobriety of manners in most part of the *Greek* and old *French* Romances, by reason of the vice of the times, wherein they were composed. Even the *Astrea* and some others which have followed, are yet somewhat licentious: but the *Modern* Romances (I speak of the good ones) are so far from this fault, that one shall find not one expression, not one word which may shock chaste ears, nor one single action, which may give offence to Modesty.

If any object, that love is there treated of after a fashion so delicate and so insinuating, that the bait of this dangerous

dangerous passion, enters glibly in young hearts.

I answer, that it is so far from being dangerous, that it is even in some sort necessary, that the young persons of the World should be acquainted with this passion, that they may stop their ears to that which is criminal, and be better enabled to deal with its artifices, and know their conduct in that which has an honest and sacred end; which is so true that experience lets us see, that such as are least acquainted with Love, are most obnoxious to it; and the most ignorant are the soonest Duped. Add hereto that nothing so much refines and polishes the wit, nor conduces so much to the fashioning, and making it fit and proper for the World, as the reading of good Romances. These are the dumb Tutors, which succeed to those of the Colledge, and which teach to speak and to live by a Methode

thode more instructive, and much more perswasive then theirs, and of which may be said, what *Horace* affirms of *Homers Iliades*, that they teach morality more effectually, and much better then the most able Philosophers.

Monfieur *d'Urfee* was the first who retrived them from Barbarity, and brought them to rules, in his incomparable *Astrea*; the most ingenious and most polite work, which ever appeared in this kind, and which has Eclipsed the glory which *Greece, Italy,* and *Spain* had acquired. Nevertheless he has not discouraged those who come after him to undertake what he had enterprised; and has not so wholly engrossed the publick admiration; but that some yet is left for the many excellent Romances, which have appeared in *France* since his. None can without astonishment look upon those which a Maid, as illustrious by  
her

her Modesty, as by her merit, has published under a borrowed Name, depriving her self so generously of that glory which was her due, and not seeking for a reward but in her vertue: as if while she travailed thus for the honour of our Nation, she would spare that shame to our sex. But at the length, time has done her that Justice which she denyed herself, and has informed us that the *Illustrious Bassa, Grand Cyrus, and Clalia* are the Works of *Madam de Scudery*; to the end that hereafter the art of making Romances, which might defend it self against scrupulous censours, not only by the commendations which the Patriarch *Pholius* gives it, but likewise by the great examples of those who applyed themselves thereto, might also justifie it self by hers; and which after having been cultivated by Philosophers, as *Apuleus* and *Athenagoras*, by Roman Pretors, as *Sisenna*;

and their Original. 111

*fenna*; by Consuls as *Petronius*, by pretendors to the Empire as *Clodius Albinus*, by Priests as *Theodorus Prodromus*, by Bishops as *Heliodorus* and *Achilles Tatius*, by Popes as *Pius Secundus*, who writ the Loves of *Euryalus* and *Lucretia*, by Saints as *John Damascenus*; it had moreover the advantage to have been exercised by a wise and vertuous Maid.

For your part, Sir, since 'tis true, as I have demonstrated, and *Plutarch* assures us, that one of the greatest charms of a mans soul is the tissue of a Fable well invented and well related; what success then may not you presume upon from *Zayde*, where the Adventures are so new and touching, and the Narration so juste and so polite. I could wish for the concern I have for that great Prince, whom Heaven has plac'd over us; that we had the History of his wonderful

derful Reign writ in a style so Noble, and with as much accuratness and discernment. The Vertue which doth conduct his actions is so Heroick, and the Fortune which attends them so surprizing, that Posterity would doubt whether it were History or Romance.

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